

Message Text

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ACTION ST-01

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 ISO-00 /010 W
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R 211706Z SEP 76
FM AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2330
INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
AMEMBASSY BAMAKO
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

UNCLAS OUAGADOUGOU 2913

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ATRN, XY
SUBJ: THE INCREASING INLAND FREIGHT TRAFFIC COMING
VIA ABIDJAN

1. AS OUR POST GROWS LARGER, MORE AND MORE OF OUR SHIPMENTS HAVE TO COME BY WAY OF THE PORT OF ABIDJAN AND THEN BY RAIL TO UPPER VOLTA. BELIEVE THIS ROUT IS ALSO BEING USED INCREASINGLY BY SHIMENTS GOING TO NIAMEY AND BAMAKO. THE WACASC SUPPORT FLIGHTS ARE A VALUABLE AND APPRECIATED SERVICE; BUT THEY SIMPLY CANNOT HANDLE THE TONNAGE WHICH IS BEGINNING TO COME OUR WAY AND WHICH WILL CONTINUE TO INCREASE AS WE MOVE INTO THE SAHEL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM.

2. THE RAIL SYSTEM FROM ABIDJAN TO UPPER VOLTA LEAVES A LOT TO BE DESIRED; BUT IT IS THE ONLY REAL ALTERNATIVE TO AIR SHIPMENT AT THIS TIME. WE THEREFORE NEED TO MAKE THE SYSTEM WORK FOR US AS WELL AS IT CAN.

3. IT SEEMS THAT THE WEAKEST PART OF THE SYSTEM IS THE INTERVAL BETWEEN GOODS BEING UNLOADED FROM THE SHIP AND THEIR BEING LOADED ONTO A RAIL CAR IN ABIDJAN. A SHIPMENT CAN GET SHUFFLED ASIDE BETWEEN PORT AND TRAIN IN ABIDJAN AND SPEND A VERY LONG TIME IN LIMBO WITHOUT ANYONE KNOWING WHERE IT IS OR WHY IT HAS NOT BEEN LOADED ON A RAIL CAR. (ONCE LOADED ONTO A RAIL CAR, WHICH HAS A NUMBER AND CAN BE TRACED, UNCLASSIFIED

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GOODS GNERALLY ARRIVE IN OUAGADOUGOU ABOUT A WEEK LATER.)

4. WHAT IS NEEDED IS SOMEONE IN ABIDJAN TO MONITOR AND SHEPHERD SHIPMENTS FROM THE PORT TO THE TRAIN. WE APPRECIATE THAT EMBASSY ABIDJAN IS NOT NOW STAFFED TO DO THIS. THE SOLUTION WOULD SEEM TO BE THE ADDITION OF A LOCAL GSO POSITION IN ABIDJAN TO MONITOR THIS GROWING TRAFFIC. AND IT WOULD SEE BEST TO DO THIS NOW, BEFORE LARGE AMOUNTS OF COMMODITIES FOR THE SAHEL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM CHOKE THE SYSTEM.

5. WE THEREFORE PROPOSE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A LOCAL GSO POSITION IN ABIDJAN TO MONITOR INLAND SHIPMENTS.

6. ABIDJAN, NIAMEY, AND BAMAKO MAY WISH TO COMMENT ON THIS PROPOSAL.GRAHAM

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